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for him, and look with more respect to the Art which is worthy the life labor of such men.

## Reminiscences.

### SKETCHES OF CHARACTER.

Messrs. Editors:—If my recollections of things past become tiresome to the lively fancies of the young readers of your *CRAYON* sketches, I must beg of you to share the blame with me for the spirit you have evoked; but, in complying with your request, I have endeavored to mingle something pleasant with the facts that were probably worth recording, and with a desire to avoid the garrulity of old age in the needless multiplication of words: yet it is easy to show that even the slight recollection of apparently indifferent incidents may sometimes prove advantageous.

In the year 1818, I was often embarrassed in the process of making megilp, not knowing whether to ascribe the fault to the mastic varnish or the drying oil. One day in particular, being much in want of the article, and finding every effort fruitless, I sat down in despair, and then would have given a hundred dollars to any one who could have taught me the cause of my failure. My mind reverted to similar difficulties in Paris; but there, when my materials failed, I had recourse to a colorman in the neighborhood. I was surprised one day to see him mount a ladder to reach his drying oil, so often wanted, from a shelf near the ceiling, and vexed that he should shake the bottle violently, scolding a little girl who had just entered the shop—I only thought it a bad specimen of his temper, but he told me my oil would settle again and become clear. It was now nine years after this occurrence that it recurred to my memory; and, for the first time, it struck me that his anger was assumed, as an excuse for shaking the bottle, and keeping it so high that it might conveniently be shaken. I immediately rose, and without being angry with any one, shook up the sediments in my numerous bottles of drying oil, and found that every one of them produced good megilp with the varnish. The brightest drying oil for this purpose is prepared by putting some litharge into a phial of raw linseed oil, exposing it to the sun, or in a sand bath or hot water, and shaking it up from time to time. When the surplus litharge settles to the bottom, the oil remains a little cloudy, and then is good for use; but when it becomes quite clear, depositing a whitish sediment, it will not answer until it is again shaken up. Simple as this anecdote is, it may be a lesson to young students to notice and remember passing events.

At that time I was painting the portrait of *BERNARDIN DE ST. PIERRE*, and I mention him as an intimate friend of the elder Vernet, so celebrated for his coast scenes and the ports of France, whose waters he so well represented; but being desirous of witnessing the waves of the ocean, he hired a bold pilot at Nantes, where he resided, to take him out to sea, during a terrific storm, where, lashed to the mast, he studied the varying forms of the raging billows.

But Saint Pierre, whose portrait I paint-

ed, with his patriarchal silver locks, though not an artist, was a charming delineator of Nature, still remains in my memory, grouped with his beautiful wife and lovely children, as a most interesting picture. A young lady of Paris, courted by many, gave encouragement to none, and her friends rebuked her for her indifference to marriage. She replied that she would never marry any one but the author of Paul and Virginia, whom she had never seen. One of her friends soon found an occasion to introduce her to St. Pierre. The blooming young woman and the venerable author were mutually pleased, and they were soon after married. I was introduced to her and her lovely children, Paul and Virginia. Requesting of him some account of himself, he wrote me a memoir, which was afterwards prefixed to an edition of his works. This memoir he pleasantly addressed to me—"à mon cher Philadelphie, le Rembrandt de l'Amérique."

At the distribution of the Decennial prizes at the Paris National Institute, where all the learned men of that body were assembled, I asked of our consul who that fine looking, but proud man was, that was crossing the hall. "It is the great chemist, *CHAPTAL*—of a noble family, yet of influence during the Revolution, and now Senator and Councillor of the Emperor." When I was afterwards painting his portrait, knowing him to be a man of taste, and owning a fine gallery of pictures, I asked him whether Napoleon, who was concentrating in Paris, by means of his conquests, the finest works of Art—whether Napoleon was himself a judge of the Arts? "Not at all"—was his reply—"But his great talent is to judge of character, and always to employ the proper agents: the artists, who accompany his armies, make the selection of pictures and statues." After a few moments' pause, Chaptal continued—"Napoleon is a surprising man!—I, even I!" said the proud Chaptal, "I, even I, cannot approach him without an indescribable awe!"

This reminds me of the judgment of another contemporary of the great chieftain. Our Minister at the Court of France, General Armstrong, was never in a good humor with the Emperor, for his sequestration of American merchant ships. A captain of one of them, requesting the favor of his influence, asked General Armstrong what he thought of Napoleon? To my surprise our minister replied in slow, but strong emphatic words—"Why, sir, I think—that he is—the most extra-ordi-nary man that God-Almighty ever created—but, the greatest rascal that God-Almighty ever permitted to exist!"

The Mathematician, *DELAMETRIE*, told me that one day at the National Institute, *Washington* was mentioned with great praise. Napoleon remarked that indeed he was a great man. On saying this, he relapsed into a deep thought, and Delametrie was sure that at that moment he decided *not* to imitate Washington, and become *second* to him, but to be *first* in another character; as his conduct subsequently proved.

*CANOVA* made a fine colossal head of him, which has served as the basis of all the portraits since made, with the exception of *David's* cold likeness, *Isabey's* weak miniature, and the unfinished sketch by *GERARD*, who declined painting the por-

trait of any, the most distinguished persons, anywhere but in his own painting room. He was, however, induced by *DENON*, to consent to paint the Emperor at St. Cloud. At the day and hour appointed, Gerard was ready with his canvas, easel and palette, under the north light of the breakfast-room. On entering, the Emperor partook of two cups of coffee and toast, as he walked to and fro—then, advancing to the artist's chair, he said, "Now I suppose I must become your subject—but if I was a painter, my model should never sit—I would paint him as he walked about the room." An observation that by no means pleased Gerard. After sitting about twenty minutes, he suddenly rose, saying that some business must take him away, without any apology, or engagement for another sitting, which the artist never would consent to solicit: and from this unfinished head the numerous portraits were painted by Gerard, for presentations to foreign courts. This anecdote was told me by Gerard himself, as I looked at his fine, but unfinished sketch.

On the approaching marriage with the archduchess, Maria Louisa, Isabey was called out, to the village where she stopped, until arrangements were made for her grand entry into Paris, to paint her miniature. Chaudet was required to proceed there and make her bust, in doing which he caught cold and died; and Gerard was entreated by Denon for a similar office, which he declined on the score of sickness. "But," said Gerard, "to show that I was not sick, I was out in the street every day." I then remarked to Gerard, (whom I had thought was a native of France), "the emperor can be no favorite with you." "No," said he, with energy, "I am a Roman, and he has robbed my country!" As he said these words I was looking at one of his imperial commissions, a splendid whole length portrait of the beautiful Queen of Naples, who had been sitting that morning. I could not forbear complimenting Gerard on his execution of her white satin dress, as I compared it, decorated with bouquets of diamonds, as it was arranged on a manikin—saying, that in my estimation his painted satin was worth more than all the diamonds on her dress.

Some days after this I was invited to his atelier, at an hour fixed, but finding a carriage waiting at his door, I amused myself for an hour in a print-shop opposite, till the carriage drove off, and then was shown up to receive his expression of regret that I had not come at the appointed hour, "for," said he, "I was taking the last sitting of Bernadotte, before he leaves Paris to proceed to Stockholm. I wanted you to know him, for he is a clever and good-hearted fellow."

On my return from Italy, twenty years after this, I found Gerard in enfeebled health, having relinquished Imperial portraiture, and painting historical subjects, and honored by the Emperor, whom he, nevertheless, could not love, with the title of Baron of the Empire. It was always thus that Napoleon sought to gain, if not the favor and services, at least the silence of his enemies. Carnot, in the National Assembly, had opposed, in a speech of two hours, the Consulship for life of Bonaparte. When I applied to Carnot to sit to me for his portrait for our American gallery, he

declined the honor, saying that in retiring from public view, disappointed in his republican hopes, his sole object now was to superintend the education of his two daughters. Yet the persevering and crafty Napoleon at last succeeded in drawing forth the unwilling Carnot, to undertake his favorite work, the survey of the public military works.

REMBRANDT PEALE.

## THE WILDERNESS AND ITS WATERS.

### CHAP. IV

#### SMOOTH WATER FISHING.

Our fishing "ground" was where a cold brook entered the small lake, on the shore of which we had camped, and at the mouth of which the trout had gathered all through the summer to enjoy the coolness of the brook water. It was a stream sufficiently large to admit a small boat to pass up several miles, and emptied so quietly that the lake was not in the slightest degree ruffled or disturbed, except by passing gusts of wind. This necessitated the greatest caution in approaching the fish. Angler's boat leading the way some distance, he had already taken several noble fish when we came up. Student, seated in the stern of the boat, paddled gently up, Angler pointing out the position we might take with the least danger of alarming his game.

The banks were clothed with willows, and an occasional dwarfish water-maple, down to the very extremes of the points which they made, the brook being, between these points, about twenty feet in width, and for fifty feet out into the lake the water seemed inhabited by large numbers of fish, and was constantly in commotion by their rising. Angler called our attention to the fact, that the large trout never *break* the water in rising; but take their food so delicately at the surface that a novice might easily mistake the motion for the rising of an air bubble, and assured us likewise that we would always find that they are feeding in earnest where they rise in this way. We saw indeed that no large fish showed themselves above the surface, though the small ones of a half-pound weight and less were leaping constantly. Knowing this, we watched more attentively the quiet eddies the patriarchs left in their wing. Angler was playing a small fish when we took our position, and just as he secured him, a large one, evidently, broke about midway between the boats. Disengaging his line, he cast directly over the spot where he had risen, and he rose at once, hooking himself strongly. He led down, but Angler, by a steady though gentle strain, kept him from going to the bottom, where he would at once have fastened the line and broken loose. Reeling in the line until he could humor the fish in his running about, he managed to keep him so near the top of the water that we now and then saw him quite clearly for an instant, when alarmed by the sight of us he made a desperate rush for the lily-pads, which covered the water for some yards out from the shore. Angler always managed to turn him, until, wearied, he answered sluggishly to the strain on the line, and came up to the side of the boat, when Angler, having a woolen glove on his hand, grasped him carefully just behind the gills and took him into the boat.

The sport grew exciting, he taking a fish

at nearly every cast, and sometimes two and three at a cast, the greater portion of the time being spent in landing such active prey without net or gaff. The drizzle becoming thicker, and breaking the smoothness of the water, we could come on the ground without disturbing the fish, and so concluded to try our luck, if it were possible without destroying Angler's sport by our clumsiness. So, Student managing the boat, I proceeded with the utmost care, and remembering the instructions given at the falls, to make my cast where I had just noticed a "raise." My flies fell rather clumsily, but the kindly rain-drops assisted me, and my fish hooked himself, when, following my instructor's motions, I landed him without much difficulty. Lengthening the line a foot or two at each cast, and occasionally securing a tolerable fish, I shortly found myself casting eight or ten yards with perfect ease, and presently struck a powerful fish. He attempted to run down, and at the same time away from the boat, but a slight but steady pull kept him up when he turned to come towards us. This was a contingency I had not provided for, and in my trepidation I forgot to reel my line in, so that running under the boat, he found slack enough to let him reach bottom, and when I had shortened my line enough to renew the invitation to come aboard, I found it fast—he had fastened it to some stump or root at the bottom, and then probably tore away at once, for he could have broken either rod or line, if he could have had a direct strain upon them. I finally pulled up the line minus leader and flies. I assumed the philosophical indifference with which Angler had regarded the loss of several fine fish, and sat down to put on a new leader.

At this juncture, Angler broke his rod by striking a fish too near the boat, and I proffered him mine to continue fishing with while we went back to the camp with what we had already secured, to prepare breakfast. We found Moodie lying on his back on the hay smoking his short pipe, and the potatoes done, and placed before the fire between two of the tin pans which served as plates. The kettle was washed out, and some cranberries put over the fire, while the fish were dressed, and the frying-pan scoured out to fry them. The blazing fire was most grateful to us, drenched as we were; and we were still further rejoiced to see the rain cease, and the mist begin to rise from the gorges and hollows in the hills on the opposite side of the lake; then the clouds gathering themselves together overhead, slowly broke open, disclosing a sky of the purest and most melting blue. Through an opening, came by, and by a burst of sunlight across the hill. Oh! how beautiful it was in the midst of the broad green gloom of the shadowed landscape, and it floated along, sinking into the ravines, and rising up again to climb new ridges, and sink into new gorges; and then other and larger gleams followed, until soon fragmentary mists were flying over head, and blue shadows were chasing each other over a golden sun-lit scene. We threw off our wet coats, and hanging them to dry before the fire, sat down to soak in the sunshine. Angler returned as the sun came out, and with the most ravenous appetites we sat down on the ground to eat breakfast.

This over, with the laziness of surfeited men we lay down to rest and talk over the morning's work. "How did you like my rod?" asked I, of Angler. "Too stiff in the lower joint," he replied. "But, does not that give you more power in handling a fish?" I again inquired. "No! on the contrary, for the weight is all thrown on the upper joint, and especially on the tip, rendering it much more likely to break, than if the strain were equal along the rod. Hence, almost all the tackle shops in New York and London supply each rod with three or four extra tips, whereas a properly made rod will never break at the tip. The Irish understand these things better, and make their rods accordingly. A true fly-rod should be about twelve feet long for our waters, and should not exceed ten oz. in weight, with the butt suited in size to the hand, then diminished at once to such a size that the taper will be uniform to the tip, and the curve, when under strain, the same through its whole length—the butt serving only as a handle. The best rods are made in three pieces of four feet each, and with but one ferrule, the tip being spliced on to prevent, as far as possible, any inequality in its burdens."

I remarked further, that the largest of my fish had been caught on two flies which he had given me—a brown hackle with peacock body, and a ginger hackle, body ditto. "Yes," he added, "they are excellent flies; and, if you add the red and black cock's hackle, and the black and Irish grouse hackle, you can fish successfully with them in any water, by varying the size according to the water and the season. For very quiet places, where the fish are shy, you must use flies made on hooks even as small as No. 12. The palmers and hackles, in their varieties, almost preclude the necessity of any other kind of flies. Every angler likes to have a full book on leaving home; but the only fly I have ever been obliged to make on the stream, is my brown hackle: somehow or other, everybody wants that fly; and I never fit up a whip without one on it, at any season of the year." "But," said I, "you always have one or more winged flies on your whip?" "Ah! yes," he replied, "I like the Chantrey and the Holland for their names' sakes—the red and brown spinner are, also, noble flies. But you will observe that the variety of hackles includes almost all the colors and appearance of all other flies. They are simply made and durable; and, when they will not take, I advise any angler to give up the attempt with anything. But every young fisherman must have his experience and his proficiencies, to the exclusion of all others, and must explode his theories, over and over again, until he becomes a master. Then he will agree with all other masters; and until he reaches that point, no other's experience will serve him, nor would I give a fig for him if it would. Let us live our whole lives." So saying, he lit a cigar, and called lustily to the guides, who had wandered with their rifles into the woods, to come and load up, then set about to repair his broken rod, a job soon achieved, as it had broken square off where the wood entered the ferrule.

Our boats reloaded, and all things in readiness, we bade adieu to the scene of our